

In The Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A An isolated protein which has an amino acid sequence ~~identical to or substantially identical to an amino acid sequence~~ represented by SEQ ID NO: 5, or a salt thereof.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) A An isolated protein which has an amino acid sequence ~~identical to or substantially identical to an amino acid sequence~~ represented by SEQ ID NO: 6, or a salt thereof.

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) The isolated protein according to claim 1 or 2, which has PDZ domains and WW domains and is expressed specifically in the brain and has an ability to bind to activin receptors and/or activin intracellular information transmission molecules.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The isolated protein according to claim 3, wherein the activin intracellular information transmission molecule is Smad3.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) The isolated protein according to claim 1 or 2, which has 5 PDZ domains and 2 WW domains and is expressed specifically in the brain and has an ability to bind to activin receptors and Smad3.

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) A An isolated partial peptide of the protein according to claim 1, or an isolated partial peptide of the protein according to claim 2, or a salt thereof.

Claims 7-14. (Cancelled)

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) A method for determining a binding protein to the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, or a salt thereof, which comprises using contacting the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, or a salt thereof with a test protein, and identifying a binding protein which interacts with the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, or a salt thereof.

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 15, which comprises introducing (1) an expression vector which fuses the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, with a DNA-binding region of a transcriptional factor and (2) a fusion library between a gene encoding a test protein and a transcription-activating region, into a host cell having a reporter gene maintaining a region binding to the transcriptional factor on a promoter, and measuring a change in the amount of the expressed reporter gene which is increased by a binding of the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, to the test compound.

Claims 17-23. (Cancelled)

Claim 24. (Currently Amended) The method for determining a protein according to claim 16 ~~or the screening method according to any one of claims 18 to 23~~, which comprises using the two-hybrid method.

Claims 25-30. (Cancelled)

Claim 31. (New) A composition comprising the protein according to claim 1, or the protein according to claim 2, or the partial peptide according to claim 6, or a salt thereof, together with a diluent and an optional carrier.